



Centro Tecnológico das indústrias do Couro (CTIC) - 20th anniversary

The Leather Technology Centre, Portugal, was created as a result of an initiative between the leather industry and the public institutions IAPMEI (Institute for Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises) and INETI (Portuguese Institute for Engineering and Technology). Known as CTIC it was inaugurated in 1994.

The Alcanena leather cluster comprises approximately 95% of the Portuguese tanning industry and is located in the centre of the country. This leather hub is serviced by a common effluent treatment plant and a waste disposal site that receives segregated solids from the tanning sector, the effluent treatment plant and domestic waste. CTIC is strategically located in this area, and its facilities include laboratories accredited by the Portuguese Institute for Accreditation, and a pilot plant for research and development of leather processing. The professional staff of 24 offers services in the following areas:

Laboratory services

The laboratories are divided into five categories: chemical analysis, physical/mechanical testing, microbiology, environmental technology, and acoustics and noise. The nature of the services provided are wide and comprise analysis and testing in the following areas:

- Leather in manufacture and as a final product.
- Chemicals used within manufacture.
- Water and liquid effluents.
- Solid waste, sludge and soil.
- Emissions, air quality and noise.

Management systems

The organisation has an experienced and suitably qualified consultancy team, and supports both the leather industry and other sectors. The implementation of management systems, training and audits are performed in the following areas:

- Quality – ISO 9001.
- Environment – ISO 14001.
- Health and safety – OHSAS18001.
- Social Responsibility – SA 8000.
- Laboratory accreditation – ISO/IEC 17025.
- Food Safety – ISO 22000, HACCP, BRC, IFS.

Health and safety at work

Authorised by ACT – Autoridade para as Condições de Trabalho (Working Conditions Authority) – CTIC provides



technical assistance and services at work to prevent occupational hazards and to promote safety of the workforce, namely:

- Hazard identification and risk assessment at work.
- Prevention plan of occupational hazards development.
- Implementation of self-protection measures.
- Conception and development of a training and information programme to promote health and safety at work.
- Coordination and control of internal audits and inspections.
- Identification and technical estimations in areas of lighting, thermal comfort and stress, chemical contamination and dust, and noise in the workplace.

Development and innovation

Consultancy and services are based on the development and optimising of processes with the aim of creating new or improved products in terms of reliability, cost improvements and environmental impact.

These actions include both national and European incentives, and are often developed with other scientific and technological entities that include companies, as well as national and foreign organisations.

Training

A number of activities have been developed in line with legal requirements concerning training and qualification of human resources - as well as personal improvement - within companies.

These schemes can be based on intra-company studies, where CTIC develops courses to meet the needs of both the company and the workforce according to the legal requirements. This kind of training is carried out within the company where services are being provided, although CTIC offers a wide range of training courses within their own facilities.

Environment and energy

The range of experience gained by services to the leather sector has raised the technical expertise level so that CTIC has branched out as a partner in other industries. These include food, abattoirs and meat processing, pulp and paper, wood, cork, ceramics and other manufacturing sectors. The main services to the leather industry and other industries include:

- Licencing procedures.
- Environmental diagnosis and audits.

- Environmental impact studies, monitoring and management.
- Wastewater and solids waste management and control.
- Solvent management.
- Energy audits and solutions.

Food safety

An example of the expanding interests of CTIC, based on expertise gained from developing systems within the leather sector and the scope of its laboratory services, is its shift into aspects of food safety. Here, where both biological and

chemical contamination has caused serious harm to consumers, standards both mandatory and optional have been developed. In response to both market and consumer demands the following services are being provided:

- Food Safety Systems Implementation HACCP, NP EN ISO 22000, BRC/IFS.
- Food technical consultation.
- Hygiene/sanitary and prerequisites audits.
- Food safety systems training.
- Accredited laboratories for water and food analysis. ☉

PATENTED RECIPROCATING SPRAYING LINE

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